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ABSTRACT

This study describes practices and techniques employed by 25 college teachers who are acknowledged as outstanding. The efficacy of the practices and techniques was validated narratively by 200 students. This study identifies variables that characterize effective college teaching and suggests opportunities for further study and analysis. Major areas of discussion are the outstanding college teacher, effective college teaching, conducting the course, and grading and evaluation. In conclusion, although outstanding teaching may be inimitable in some ways, certain practices are more a matter of craft than of art. (Author)

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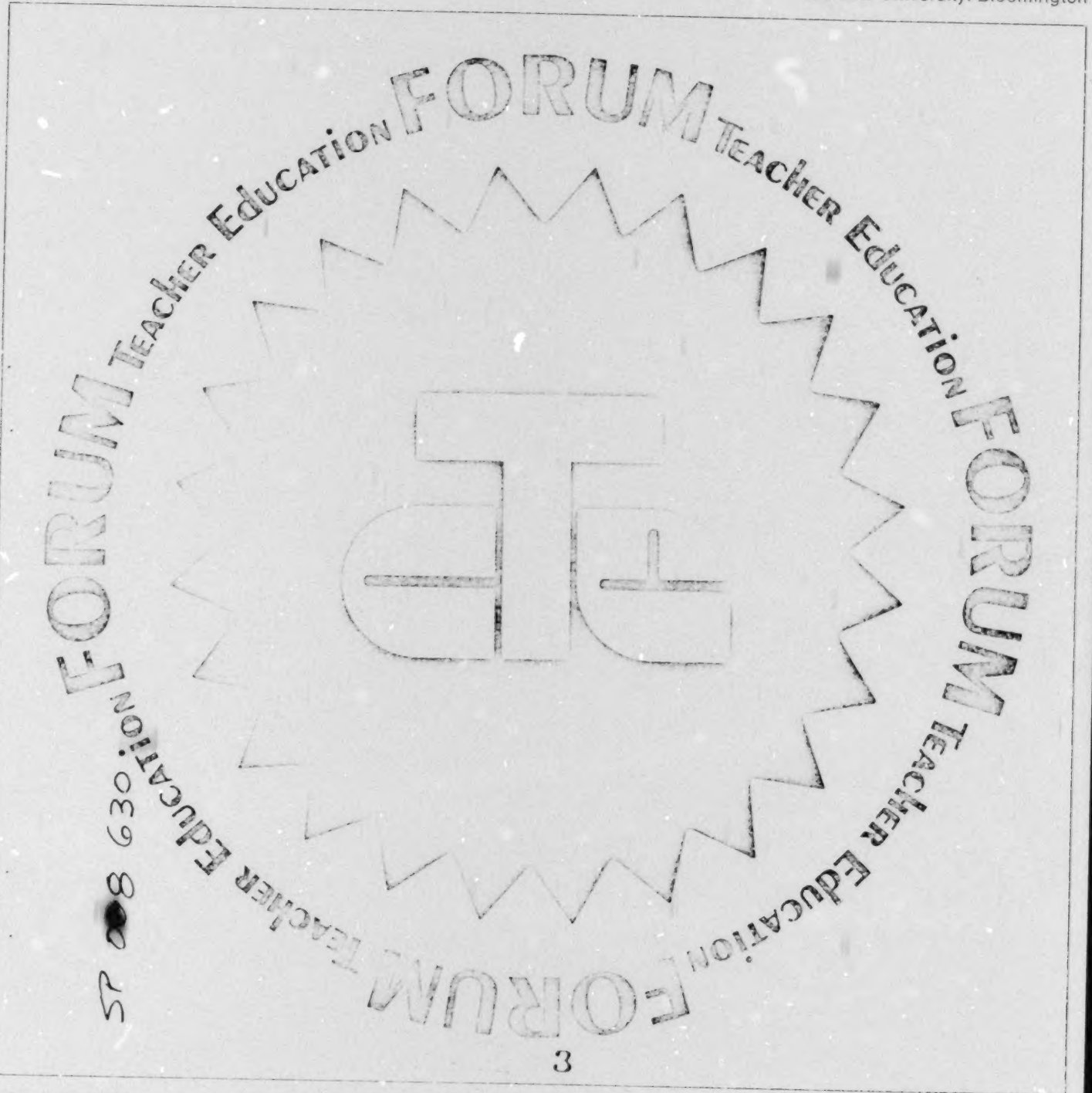

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PREFACE

This report provides and discusses information on effective teaching received from 24 outstanding college teachers and from approximately 200 of their students. It results from a project financed by USOE (Title V EPDA of the Higher Education Act) and conducted during 1972-73 by the Center for Higher Education of Western Washington State College. The purpose of the project was to identify and describe certain aspects of teaching in order to share this information with others in the profession, particularly those responsible for preparing college and community college teachers, and those involved in various campus efforts toward improving college instruction. Much of the material in this report is in the words of the participants as gained from observations, interviews, and questionnaires (see the introductory section for a full discussion).

Much more attention is paid to the development of curriculum than to its presentation, teaching. Annually millions of dollars are spent for development of new programs or the remodeling of curriculum. Far less effort and support are given to instruction, despite increased expenditures on technological assists to teaching. Danforth has discontinued its Harbison awards, perhaps the most notable recent recognition of outstanding teaching. The U.S. Office of Education has no major program for research on post-secondary teaching (as contrasted with programs for preparing college teachers through fellowships, program support, etc.). And although more colleges and universities than ever before are establishing committees, centers, or other agencies charged with exploration or demonstration of effective teaching, the efforts are scattered and often irregular.

Though there is a large amount of writing on college teaching, there is not much informal, first-hand information about teaching from professors themselves. There is even less information from their students--descriptive information, not just tabulations or percentages from categorical evaluation instruments. To discover, for instance, that 80 per cent of the students who completed an evaluation instrument rate high a professor who "grades fairly and appropriately" is not very illuminating to a potential teacher, or to a practitioner who has trouble with grading and who wonders what it is others do that is perceived to be "fair and appropriate." Actions, decisions and attitudes underlying the data of research reports and prescriptive writings on effective college teaching are seldom described by the first parties, the

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professor and the students. In part, this probably is due to lack of a ready market for anecdotes and impressions about effective teaching, and to reluctance by professors to offer information that might seem obvious or unexciting.[1]

In the literature on teaching, there is no lack of general statements about what the effective teacher should be or should do. There no doubt would be common acceptance of the three essential qualities described by Gilbert Highet in The Art of Teaching--memory, will-power, and kindness.[2] There might also be agreement with Highet that we should borrow certain emphases from the world of advertising: "Make it (teaching) vivid . . . Make it memorable . . . Make it relevant." These characteristics and prescriptions seem obvious. So do the teaching goals identified by a 1972-73 American Council of Education research project that found 90 per cent of the 42,000-plus college faculty surveyed in agreement about three primary goals:

-to develop students' creative capacities,
-to assist them in mastery of knowledge in the discipline,
-to increase their desire and ability to undertake self-directed learning.

More systematic attention to teaching is available. Notable is McKeachie's Teaching Tips: A Guidebook for the Beginning College Teacher.[3] His discussions and summaries of research on such matters as lecturing, relative effects of instructional methodologies according to varying situations and students are most valuable to the practitioner and the curriculum builder. McKeachie presents the weight of evidence on various approaches and techniques and provides suggestions, comparisons, and contrasts as well as reflections gained through his own teaching. But, by intention, his book does not include many first-hand accounts or observations. Neither do such highly respected sources as the Second Handbook of Research on Teaching (American Educational Research Association), which contains exhaustive reports, critiques, analyses and bibliographies on nearly every aspect of research on teaching.[4]

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[1]A few journals, notably Improving College and University Teaching, do accept such contributions, but these contributions are outnumbered by programmatic, or prescriptive, or research-based submissions.

[2]The writer highly recommends Highet's book for its clarity, style, and historical, literary and artistic examples, and its discussion of the moral and philosophical requirements for practitioners. But Highet's references are especially to private and selective institutions and their clientele, and his book was written a generation ago. His choice of the word "art" in his title indicates his view of teaching. His book provides an interesting and appropriate contrast to McKeachie's book on teaching (see footnote #4), though there are overlaps and recognitions of both art and "science" on the part of both writers. The Art of Teaching (Vintage Books/Knopf-Random House, 1950).

[3]Sixth edition (D.C. Heath and Company, 1969). The references and appendices contain examples of check lists and evaluation criteria and are a further benefit to be gained from this readable and useful text.

[4](Rand McNally & Company, 1973).

A recent and useful source is The Recognition and Evaluation of Teaching, one of the products of a two-year program of action and study jointly sponsored by the AAUP and the Association of American Colleges through a Carnegie grant. The report examines the status of the college professor and discusses methods commonly employed to evaluate and appraise instruction. Some institutional case histories are provided, with examples of evaluation instruments for assessing teaching. In addressing college teaching, Dr. Kenneth Eble, author of the report, writes:

> This project proceeds from the general premise that almost everything needs improving and for the specific reason that those responsible for framing the project thought there was a need for improvement for college instruction (italics added).

Additionally,

> ...teaching, for all its endless verbalizing, is a silent secret art.[5]

But it need not be, for professors, when asked, are willing to discuss their personal practices openly and informally. The present report, which is offered as an "Occasional Paper," demonstrates this. Dr. Eble and Dr. Paul Woodring of Western Washington State College, provided valuable assistance in selecting the topics for this report, in framing the questions that produced the information of the report, in identifying a number of the participants, and in helping outline the contents of the report.

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[5]pp. 2-3, The Recognition and Evaluation of Teaching (AAUP, One Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C. 20036).

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INTRODUCTION

In 1970, Western Washington State College's Committee on the Improvement of Instruction sponsored a series of presentations on effective teaching, with attention to actions, techniques and methods employed by outstanding college teachers. For eight weeks, once a week, a regional professor who had received an award for outstanding teaching made an informal presentation to WWSC faculty, describing and illustrating particular techniques and methods. Discussion followed for half an hour or more. The college's Center for Higher Education summarized the presentations in a report which was made available to faculty at Western Washington State College (WWSC) and which was sent to colleges and community colleges in the area. The report was mentioned in the Chronicle of Higher Education in an article about teaching by Kenneth Eble, as an example of a readily available and relatively inexpensive way of exchanging information about effective teaching.

A result of the Chronicle reference was requests from more than 100 colleges and universities (agencies or individuals) for copies of the report. In notices of receipt, a number of persons suggested that a wider sample of professors be used and more detail provided. This "Occasional Paper" is an elaboration (not a "how-to-teach-more-effectively" prescription). From some observations and interviews but mostly from questionnaires, information has been provided by two dozen outstanding or highly effective college teachers and by about 200 of their students.

The Professors

The two dozen teachers who contributed information for this report were chosen for certain accomplishments and characteristics. First, each person had won an outstanding teaching award or had been identified as an outstanding teacher by peers and students. Some were winners of the Harbison award for gifted teaching.[6] Some were identified through the ACE/AAUP study earlier referred to (see Preface). Others emerged through local campus recognition and were substantiated by inquiry to associations, organizations or other sources external to the particular institution.

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[6]During 1962-73 the Danforth Foundation made 124 awards of $10,000 each to professors in colleges, community colleges and universities whose excellence in teaching was identified beyond doubt and who had taught for at least five years in undergraduate studies. Eighty-five institutions across the United States were so represented. In a brochure that discusses the Harbison award, there is a section entitled, "Their characteristics ...as seen by others." It reads as follows:

> A mixture of integrity, humility, sound scholarly achievement, and deeply felt concern for his fellow creatures, coupled with that rare gift, the ability to communicate enthusiasm for his subject along with its essence.... He listens very genuinely, and confusing questions get

No claim is made that the professors are a representative sample, either of all professors (by definition) or of all gifted teachers. However, they contain among themselves a range of experiences and personal-professional variables that identify them in many ways with other practitioners. In selecting them, an attempt was made to include certain variables, individual and institutional. In profile, we have:

	No. of Persons
0-9 years of college teaching experience	7
10-19 years	12
20+ years	5
Math/Science as the major field/area	5
Social Science	6
Humanities	7
Professional (e.g., law, engineering, education, nursing)	6
Lower-division students generally taught	15
Upper-division	12
Regular programs/courses/sequences usually taught	19
Special programs (e.g., honors, compensatory, etc.)	7
Lecture approach commonly used	11
Seminar	10
Lab	9
Other (e.g., independent study, programmed or units, etc.)	6
0-25 students in typical class or section taught	6
26-50	10
50+	7
Female	11
Male	13
Caucasian	17

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reformulated with the kind of cogency that preserves their intent ... a builder of fires, a piquer of psyches ... She has a deep, courageous, and articulate commitment to the betterment of society, to human justice, and to the eradication of "mindlessness" ... Supremely ethical, remarkably genial, but finally a private man who is admired by faculty and students alike as one whose life is all of a piece ... The quality I remember most vividly in him is his laughter. He is an amazingly open, compassionate, and astute man who views the roles and posturings adopted by the human race with a fine sense of irony ... Her own uncompromising honesty encourages honesty from her students ... He strives to give students a sense of self-identity-to make them aware of themselves as individuals and members of society each responsible to the other ... He provides a stimulating and challenging (as well as demanding) excursion into the moral and ethical structure of our society ... By example, nagging irony and involved care, she presses the individual student towards objective experience ... Brilliance, sensibility, humor, independence of judgement,

Non-Caucasian	7
Ph.D. or doctorate highest degree held	14
Master's	9
Bachelor's	1

(Totals are not always 24 because of overlaps, split assignments, etc.)

As for their institutions:

Different states represented	17
Public institutions	17
Private	7
Universities	13
Colleges	7
Community colleges	4
2500 or fewer students	4
2501-7500	8
7501-very large	12
Urban setting	9
Suburban or urban/suburban	11
Rural	4

The Students

The student bodies were mostly coeducational (a few recently became co-educational), several were predominantly black, about half were mainly residential, and the other half were mainly commuter. The students who contributed information were chosen by the particular faculty member with instructions to choose them as randomly as possible from recent membership in the class or course the faculty member used as his or her primary reference.

Gathering of Information

Though several interviews and local presentations (at WWSC) were involved, most of the information came from questionnaires which were tested out beforehand with several local faculty considered to be highly effective teachers (and who were not among the twenty-four respondents). All twenty-four completed

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and intellectual vitality ... He has used cooperative research efforts as a teaching device, demonstrating that good teaching and good research can complement each other rather than compete ... He has that special kind of curiosity which is on one level the first mark of an educated man and on another a symptom of an open, humane personality-of a man concerned with sharing and giving through the learning process ... A gifted teacher who shares that gift-a model for students who are themselves teachers.

the questionnaires, whether or not they were interviewed or made presentations.

Professors were asked to provide certain biographical and statistical information and to answer in detail a set of questions, with instructions attached to the questions in order to keep replies within target areas. The questions addressed the identification of needs of the particular class the professor used as a primary reference (the class or course the professor felt would best serve to identify his or her selection as an outstanding or effective teacher) . . . the selection of content for the course . . . establishment of objectives and goals for the course . . . class preparation . . . presentation of material and content . . . evaluation and grading . . . evaluation of the instructor . . . and "other." Responses varied from fairly lengthy essays to a few pages, with varying emphasis on particular topics.

Students' questionnaires were distributed by professors but then returned directly to the Center for Higher Education of WWSC in addressed, stamped envelopes that identified the institution but not the student. These questionnaires were more precise, more restrictive of response, and they demanded 4-5 pages of particular information. Student perceptions of professors' strengths were addressed to:

professors' organization of course content,
presentation of material and conduct of the class,
communication of professors' expectations and standards,
grading and evaluation,
professors' attitude toward and involvement in the particular field,
personal and physical characteristics of the professor,
"other."

In a cover letter to professors, the purpose of the study was explained and anonymity of individual information was promised. From an initial contact with approximately 36 selected teachers, two dozen were chosen according to variables desired (see prior tabulations). In fact, only four rejections were received and all of these were explained in terms of time pressures or other matters not related to unwillingness to participate.[7]

Students were informed that positive information was being sought, information about what they thought or observed that made the particular professor an effective teacher. Students were told that the purpose of the project was to accumulate information about what effective teachers do and that the result would be the development of a report containing examples and discussion of such actions and activities.

Student responses proved to be free and unreluctant, in accord with the purposes explained. About 80 per cent of the student questionnaires were returned with complete return from some institutions and 50 per cent or better

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[7]Nonetheless it took several months to gather all the information. Inevitably, there were moves, sicknesses, and other delays that consumed time. Once chosen the twenty-four selections were adhered to, no substitutions. The original choice was twenty-five, but one became unavailable.

from all. It is likely the students are more representative than are the professors because of the selection procedures.

Much of this report is in the words of the respondents, with minor editing or abridging by the author. Anonymity was promised to the respondents, many of whom were reluctant to put down on paper what might seem self-evident or perhaps trite. As one professor stated, after the fourth attempt to get at the topic in a meaningful way:

> I wish you good fortune...but am skeptical that you'll learn much of value or, at least, that I've contributed much.

This, however, was followed by several pages of information and comments that suggested the respondent would be someone most institutions would like to have at hand, and that students would agree wholeheartedly. Nonetheless, that response was repeated in varying form on many of the professors' submissions. If the best are abashed, no wonder little first-hand accounting is available. It is understandable and it is discouraging.

THE OUTSTANDING COLLEGE TEACHER

From here on, much of this report quotes from respondents -- with minor alterations where references would indicate the name of the professor, the institution or other identifying data. When a quote is from one of the two-dozen professors, a (P) so indicates. When from a student, (S) is used.

The Outstanding Teacher Through Students' Eyes: Some Characteristics

This section includes only one (P). Professors were not asked to characterize themselves; the difficulty is obvious. But the students readily and easily discussed the two dozen professors. What kind of person? What characteristics and attributes? What expectations?

> I was enthusiastic when I first registered for the course; the experience zoomed beyond my expectations. Upon her entrance into the room, a new world opens up.

> One cannot talk about him as a teacher or a man without frequent...usage of the superlative.

> Dr. ( ) simply makes my...course a joy...is great at being a human being and therefore is great at being a teacher.

Save for students new to campus -- and probably also for most of them -- the word travels fast. Students don't see faculty evaluations, but they don't need to in the case of the outstanding teacher. (Conversely, they also don't need to for the opposite end of the scale.) Expectations are established by word-of-mouth.

> You have to know the man; you just can't expect him or his students to extract some amorphous characteristics of the prototype teacher from their relationships together in some "How To Teach..." fashion as this questionnaire reflects.

But can't you? Of the several questions posed to the students, the one dealing with the characteristics, attitudes, and attributes of the teachers produced more voluntary, more personal, responses than did any other.

> I don't know when his birthday is, but ( ) is a true Aquarian. He is very open and extremely human.

The students want personal interest to be displayed, interest and consideration.

> He is definitely not buddy-buddy--yet he is genuinely interested in students.
>
> ( ) knew my name the day he first saw it on a roster!
>
> Mrs. ( ) not only looks at the student's work, but the student himself.
>
> I would say that the most important characteristic is that they just seem to plain give a damn about the student and their (sic) work.
>
> ( ) even comes in on Saturdays. Very concerned over your individual progress.
>
> She is meticulously punctual, both for classes and for individual counseling.
>
> There is a person to person relationship (even within such a huge class)....
>
> Again, his personal interest in me as an individual extends beyond the classroom. I happened to be having trouble with a...course. He set up an extra help session for me and a few others to make sure we could get the grade we were working for.
>
> ...and bears in mind that students have got other courses going that also call for assignments.

What students call honesty is evident.

> I thoroughly respect ( ) as...deeply concerned about present happenings and working for improvement.

I feel I know ( ) as he is. Absolutely never condescending.

...untheatrical manner...image of intelligence and unflaunted self-assurance. He always seems able to found, or support his statements, with fact from specific sources.

He let us know when he wasn't feeling well, was having a bad day, felt good...was excited.... He was honest!

There is energy and there is enthusiasm, both readily apparent.

I often get the impression that she enjoys teaching and working for us as much as we enjoy being taught and working for her!

( ) is eager to share the knowledge...a feeling for students and teaching itself.

Enthusiasm is so important. It makes me want to learn the material rather than feeling I have to. In my opinion, an enthusiastic teacher is a great teacher.

Where she got her energy from at eight o'clock in the morning, I don't know.

Even though I went into her class at 8:00 a.m., coming off 5 hours of sleep, she was so alive that it carried over to me, and I was alert until I went to my next class, with the usual type of teacher.

He moves quickly and confidently, not in the usual 'I'm going to wake up any moment now.' He laughs a lot of the time. There's rarely anything derogatory in his speech or mannerisms.

The student sees a professor, a live actor on a classroom stage, in a seminar, in a lab setting or wherever. What he likes to see is a smile, and what he hopes to hear is a voice well used. Time and again these were mentioned.

...smiles a lot and this means much to me.

Her smile loosens the entire class.

Dr. ( )'s warmth invited my warmth.

...laughs quickly.... He also has a pleasant sense of humor which he turns toward himself. He is the butt of his jokes.

Absolute clarity in speech. I do not recall anyone ever having to ask her to repeat a statement. Furthermore, she spoke on the student's level.

> Although ( ) is not physically attractive, he does possess certain qualities and abilities which contribute to his effectiveness as a teacher. The most striking...is that he's a gifted and talented speaker.
>
> Although small in physical stature, he's a giant in personality.

There's also a self-assurance that comes through clearly.

> Very self-confident.
>
> Didn't find it necessary to reinforce his ego through his students.
>
> ...pretty confident of herself.
>
> ...his wit bears the mark of his intelligence. He is usually in better-than-average control of the class. He was a leader and yet remained a peer. He was willing to admit his weaknesses, his doubts, his anxieties.

Again, the student sees the teacher. One of the questions asked students dealt in part with the appearance of the instructor. After commonly pointing out that appearance is obviously superficial, a majority of students still attached considerable importance to appearance; it enters into their judgement of the teacher.

> ...neatly dressed all the time...casual and neat....
>
> I liked the fact that he was stylish in dress and hair and didn't go overboard and try to look like a 40 year old freak.
>
> ( ) keeps himself in shape physically, he's not that young but he doesn't give the impression that he's chained to a wall in the ivory dungeon....
>
> She dresses in accordance with the latest fashion..., but of her time and day....
>
> ...cares about her appearance....
>
> This question interests me as I have often wondered if I was not a little ridiculous in being pleased to see that ( ) took pains to look nice; but it does seem to have a positive effect on my own enjoyment of the class.

One of the two dozen professors stated it this way:

> (P) I am a middle-aged man who was brought up in the tradition of wearing a coat and tie, shaving and bathing every day, and using proper English. I believe in conformity with my age, position, and life style.

But there's some latitude:

> ...( ) is famous for his mismatched ties and shirts which scream for attention--hardly attributes which would aid in his credibility or teaching.

But principally, what does the student hope for yet not often find?

> ...the nicest human being I have ever come in contact with.

More tersely,

> Dam (sic) good person!

The Outstanding Professor As Professional

It's more than a job, a matter of routine, of putting the days aside one by one. Both parties are well aware of this, and they respect it. The professor has chosen a career and specified an area of involvement and expertise. The student recognizes this and it looms large in student response. The professional and the personal intermingle. The degree and the type of professional involvement vary among the twenty-four professors, but the category of involvement and awareness is common.

> (P) I have written extensively, been moderately active in professional associations, and have my share of national contacts. With the exception of a book I am currently writing (my sixth), I have no major on-going research project.

> (S) Effective teachers seem to be constantly well read in their fields by virtue of subscribing to many magazines....

> (S) His love for ( ) is passed on to the student. This is something that rarely if ever happens in a course. It has made a great deal of difference to me as a student for I went into ( ) fearing it and wishing I didn't have to take it. But because of Mr. ( ) and him alone, I have found ( ) to be a class I look forward to getting to every day.

> (P) I scan 5 papers a day and subscribe to 42 current journals and magazines.

> (S) ...a deep, even reverent, respect for the subject matter of this course. His attitude is truly contagious.

> (S) Dr. ( ) was editor of the textbook for our class. (A comment frequently repeated with apparent pride.)

> (S) ...overwhelmingly knowledgeable in many related fields.

> (S) ...seems to be immersed in the field and savouring every minute of it.

(S) ...greatest asset as a teacher is her most obvious enthusiasm for the field...can give even the most recent references in ( ).

(S) ...constantly attending meetings, conferences, lectures, and other presentations....

(S) ...her criticisms and praises are all the more valuable because she is a scholar, someone who works and studies in a field where she has the respect of her colleagues beyond her role as a teacher.

Professional and personal honesty promotes trust and further credibility.

(P) I tell the class often "I can see both points of view," and I <u>mean</u> it.

(P) It is impossible for me to request something of my students and not exhibit the behavior I request.

(P) He is full of energy in pursuing questions which it seems to me many teachers would sooner avoid...is constantly criticizing his own views about ( ) and.. is tough on himself.

(P) I assume that my framework for analyzing the world and the people/ideas/objects in it is valid, rational and legitimate. This does <u>not</u> mean it is Right or Truth...I offer my perspective to others.

(S) Readily admits she doesn't know...follows through with the current information.

(S) ...put my trust for accurate information in her.

(S) ...vibrant, energetic, and inquiring....She isn't interested in indoctrinating anyone with her views or ways.

(S) ...open for other views and attitudes.

(S) He sticks with his views but he's always the first one to admit he was wrong.

(P) I believe that a student is entitled to know where his instructor stands.

(S) She makes us aware of new theories..., why she thinks them to be good answers to problems or just rubbish. She never says <u>this</u> is what is true.

(S) One often hears her say "Well, there's another theory shot," and then bouncing back to try to explain the phenomenon in another way.

(S) He is one of the few teachers, I have had no others, who admit to their (sic)...preferences or beliefs in certain conflicts.

This attitude, or posture, is expressed in many ways in the students' responses.

(S) He has developed an attitude of learning for the sake of learning, for the enjoyment of it.

(S) He is not afraid of change. He is always looking for new and better ways to do things.

(S) ...curious and open, probably the most important thing a teacher can be.

(S) Her attitude is fresh; she is still learning and making discoveries about the material.

(S) ( )'s attitude about ( ) was fascinating. It reminded me of a child in his quest of learning how to read ....excited about your ideas while sharing hers. ( ) changed my concept that ( ) was boring.

The element of personal and professional involvement is important according to many of the student responses.

(S) The best way to learn most things is to live them and that is what we are going to do in our class.

(S) She is more than a professor. She is constantly experiencing and applying her knowledge outside the classroom.

(S) He participated in and was instrumental in instituting student drug and health programs and symposiums. For a professor to give an interesting and beneficial ( ) course is one thing, but to carry the classroom into the life of the student is the mark of an exceptional teacher.

(S) He came into teaching from private practice because of what he considered to be shortcomings in the ( ) given to the persons he interviewed.

(S) Outside the classroom, ( ) is constantly meeting with people whom she has taught and from whom she learns more about her field. Her office is rarely empty. She also gives lectures to the school at large about her field and speaks to the community....

(S) One often hears her say "Well, there's another theory shot," and then bouncing back to try to explain the phenomenon in another way.

(S) He is one of the few teachers, I have had no others, who admit to their (sic)...preferences or beliefs in certain conflicts.

This attitude, or posture, is expressed in many ways in the students' responses.

(S) He has developed an attitude of learning for the sake of learning, for the enjoyment of it.

(S) He is not afraid of change. He is always looking for new and better ways to do things.

(S) ...curious and open, probably the most important thing a teacher can be.

(S) Her attitude is fresh; she is still learning and making discoveries about the material.

(S) ( )'s attitude about ( ) was fascinating. It reminded me of a child in his quest of learning how to read ....excited about your ideas while sharing hers. ( ) changed my concept that ( ) was boring.

The element of personal and professional involvement is important according to many of the student responses.

(S) The best way to learn most things is to live them and that is what we are going to do in our class.

(S) She is more than a professor. She is constantly experiencing and applying her knowledge outside the classroom.

(S) He participated in and was instrumental in instituting student drug and health programs and symposiums. For a professor to give an interesting and beneficial ( ) course is one thing, but to carry the classroom into the life of the student is the mark of an exceptional teacher.

(S) He came into teaching from private practice because of what he considered to be shortcomings in the ( ) given to the persons he interviewed.

(S) Outside the classroom, ( ) is constantly meeting with people whom she has taught and from whom she learns more about her field. Her office is rarely empty. She also gives lectures to the school at large about her field and speaks to the community....

From these perceptions and observations, future careers are shaped, professional commitments made. The teacher as exemplar is not a myth.

(S) I really dislike ( ), but I buy it. That's how effective he is on selling.

(S) Looking at her as an example of ( ), makes us think of the many possibilities open.

(S) I find the field most interesting and attractive and I feel that this is greatly due to my professor's own attitudes.

(S) She talked about her own research and experimentation while encouraging us to do the same.

(S) In fact, he has steered me into a career.

(S) He treats his students in the ( ) Department as potential (practitioners).

(S) All things considered, this additional information has been invaluable in helping me to decide about a career in ( ).

(S) I have become far more serious about my work and have begun to consider my career as an ( ) as having already started.

(S) ...has further changed some of my otherwise stubborn ideas about ( ).

(S) Because of my interaction with her I have grown to share some of her interests and develop my own. I have renewed enthusiasm.

What does it add up to? Perhaps this:

(P) When the critical and human problems raised by the art no longer seem fresh to me, I will stop giving the class.

More bluntly:

(S) Students can detect an instructor who is phony. (personally or professionally)

EFFECTIVE COLLEGE TEACHING

Planning, Diagnosing, Expectations

This may be a generation of college students who want flexibility and increased freedom and choice, but in courses they are taking they also want direction. At least they want information about what the professor expects of them. It would be difficult to overstate the importance placed on this in the responses of the students and the two dozen professors. It seems a

reasonable request. Anyone could do it, but many don't.

> (G) ( ) did something that to me is the mark of a fine teacher, and something that very few...teachers do. He outlined the course including what we would cover throughout the quarter, what he expected our development to be....
>
> (S) Comprehensive outline, guidelines to our group projects for the term.... She tells of projects in other classes that went wrong and what we can expect...that might twist our plans.
>
> (S) Effective teachers let their students know exactly what is expected of them as students, they show an outside interest in their course subject....
>
> (S) In any case the scope of the course is familiar to the student as well as its heavy requirements in reading and writing.
>
> (S) He hands out a course outline in which he gives the books, the reading assignments that will be covered that semester. I find this useful in that you can decide whether to drop the course at the beginning....
>
> (S) ...course outline which explains everything expected of the class....

Once into the course, this continues:

> (S) ...study guides are given out at the appropriate time.
>
> (S) Independent study packets are given to help the student.
>
> (S) One thing that is extremely helpful is an assignment sheet which tells what preparatory material to read before each lecture and on what days tests are given.
>
> (S) Study guide given...prior to exams....
>
> (S) Rather than preparing a course syllabus for the entire semester (which is usually not accurate after the first couple weeks) a bimonthly or even weekly projection of the materials to be covered is most helpful.

Whether the course outline is distributed initially in a single document or distributed in serial issues as the course proceeds, the student knows what's to come, in what order and importance, and why. Discussion supplements such distributions. Anxiety is lessened, as several students pointed out.

To plan a course should involve detailed knowledge of the students taking the course. An obvious statement, but again it is infrequently done, or so it seems by the attention paid to this in students' and professors' comments.

(P) If you read carefully my "Information Please Sheet" I have attached to my first semester course..., you will notice how much information I have at hand on each student.

(P) I also study carefully the computer print-out class list, searching for information about students....

(S) The student helps to plan the course...centered around student needs and interests. A diagnosis of my needs, strengths, and weaknesses was made.

(P) ...(she makes) use of the student ideas and interests and focuses on them....

(S) She took a survey of areas students wanted covered in class before making up a course outline.

(S) First, I think he analyzed what he wanted to teach and what the typical student in his courses needed.

(S) She made a very conscientious effort, from the beginning of the course, to know the potential of each student in order to be able to provide the most beneficial....

(P) The needs of the student are determined in three ways: administration of an aptitude test, administration of a personality test, and a 30-minute personal interview with each student to let him speak his (her) mind.

Classes are not seen as homogeneous; students are individuals.

(P) Giving a diagnostic test too early in the semester (to a class needing special assistance) is often defeating to... poorly prepared students since it labels them before...a chance to prove themselves.

(P) I ask the enrollees to state their areas of concern during the first class period. Their responses are tabulated and organized into the...outline.

(P) I have spent many hours talking with young people about their careers.

(P) I take the opportunity to find out whatever I can about the preparation students have had and the reasons why they are contemplating taking that particular course. (This is used for advisement and course placement also.)

(P) I ask each student to provide a list of (previous) high school and college courses....

(P) Requiring students to list the course expectations from their own view point helps them to set their personal objectives and goals for the course in terms of the general...goals

> of the College. It is important that students realize that the course has a role to play in their total educational development and that it is not simply another meaningless requirement....

The expectations have their limits.

> (P) Depending on the sophistication of students, a teacher can have a marginal impact on their values. I also feel that some of the most contentious students are testing their values against mine.

Several professors were arbitrary in determining and prescribing course objectives and procedures. These professors nonetheless were among those most applauded by their students. Why? Because of their evident attention to subsequent student progress in class and by their attention to planning, to sharing established expectations with the class, and because of the techniques and strategies employed in their teaching (see following section). Whether the students actively participated in setting the course objectives and requirements (as in a majority of cases) is less the issue than is full information shared between professor and student and the apparent and practised concern of the professor for the individual and the class. Getting to know the student as a person, not as a number, is the goal.

> (P) ...each semester I face a group of masked young people. They have learned to mimic and memorize and even organize, without involvement of brain or heart.

> (P) ...and for God's sake try to understand in more human terms the people about whom you are writing and those you are teaching.

Selection of Goals: Preparation, Content and Approaches

With attention to students' abilities and needs, the goals, content and overall approach to the course are established, clearly and precisely.

> (P) I establish objectives and goals based on the evaluation of the preceding group.

> (P) ...behavioral objectives for the course are determined on a general basis and are presented in greater detail for individual units of instruction.

> (P) After teaching the ( ) course from a chronological point of view I decided to revamp it entirely and teach it from a topical point of view.

> (P) Different disciplines and views are presented, then shown in relation to one another.

(S) The material she selects relates to each student in some way.

(S) At this point, he decided upon a method to present the material.... This is, I think, the most effective part of his program. He chose a method that allowed him to inform the student exactly what was expected of him, and at the same time it allowed the student to reach these "expectations" at his own rate.

(S) ...she organizes her material on the basis of how fast or slow she thinks the class can progress.

(P) Preparation...involves (1) rereading the material that the class is asked to read, (2) making a rough estimate of the time to be devoted to certain key points that have to be considered, (3) considering how to elicit responses from the class, or rather from those who have to be stimulated, (4) reading whatever there is time to read on recent scholarly approaches....

(P) I read and study the texts for the course carefully so that my references to the texts in my class presentation will be precise.

(P) I try to determine the most effective means of presentation for a particular class. Some topics are (to be) optional and only those interested attend those sessions. Put another way, a plan is made in knowledge that not all students in any course will be interested in all materials. Individual differences and teacher maturity both are evidenced here.

(P) The subject is built in steps that gradually move the student to higher more complicated material.

(S) Presented more basic and general information at beginning of course--more specific as we became familiar with background and setting of subject.
(Note that a student in such a course can describe the rationale for assembling material and requirements. This is less common than one might hope, judging from the credit given to teachers who make this student-ability possible.)

(S) ...each day builds on the previous one.

(P) I design and make use of factual patterns which defy the formulation of a simple solution. Blurred factual patterns engender debate and force students to reach out for basic concepts rather than superficial response.

(S) Finally, after arriving at decisions about course content, and methods of teaching, Dr. ( ) made a serious attempt at implementing his program. He renovated his facilities to meet

his needs, and he made a conscientious effort to...(consider) individual differences in wants, needs and abilities.

(P) All students are not comfortable in an individual program. Some do not and will not study on their own. Structure for them is comforting. (This in reference to planning against an assessment of student needs and abilities determined early in the course.)

(P) (In planning, I expect) students...to master the skill of learning interdependently with others, not merely dependently on me.

(P) Too much outside material discussed during class can diffuse the focus absolutely necessary to a course in which a lot of material must be covered.

Detailed preparation is no exception.

(P) I write up daily lesson plans, usually for a week in advance. (Beginning teachers might not believe this came from the winner of a coveted national award for outstanding teaching.)

(P) (I) prepare handout sheets of contents of the lecture which include information which supplements that given in the text book as well as illustrative examples.

(P) Then I try to rethink the material in terms of my own intervening intellectual and human experience...and I look for what I know already about the specific work and also for aspects of it I have not perceived before. This because, ...the teacher must look upon the subject being taught as a living thing which is constantly changing even in subtle ways and can never be completely predictable.

(P) I have through the years gradually built up a "kit" of mimeographed diagrams, glossary, etc., which is simplified but provides the basic concepts which are sometimes so buried in the textbooks that the student...becomes lost in trivial details. The...material is prepared for distribution at appropriate times throughout the semester.

(P) In preparing...I (develop)...samples of actual papers like the ones the students will be writing.

Organization of content and presentation is reviewed periodically and is changeable.

(P) When I first started teaching the course in 1962, I made file cards of all important issues, with the page numbers of each important text's discussion of the topic. From this I organized the content I wanted to keep, and found my own position and slant by interaction with those of the texts.

> This took months, before I even began to teach. Over the years, I find that I am more mired by any notes, so I usually try some dramatic changes each year to make me free of the chains of my old thoughts. I did my own reader because the others were inadequate (not interesting, understandable, or "tickling" enough). But note the thorough preparation and selection before free flight occurred. Ask the typical student about the new instructor or the instructor new to the course who "wings it" from day one.

The detailed planning and preparation apply to the single professor and to those who work in teams or in other arrangements.

> (P) The learning team approach assumes that my task is to aid a student to make discoveries by confronting him with learning experiences that require him to conceptualize, integrate, synthesize, expand--to think systematically and independently. However, learning per se does not and cannot take place as the direct result of my efforts in the classroom. Learning is the result of organizational and developmental manipulations inside a person's head.... (and the result of organization preceding this).
>
> (S) The course was set up on a tape-tutorial system. Then, in class, this instructor would answer any questions relating to the subject....
>
> (P) As the lab now stands, each objective in the class can be reached by the student as she or he selects media that is best suited for...particular needs. Choices of media include...tape/slide narrations, initial contact and accelerated programs, text or reference books, teacher lectures, demonstrations, live or videotaped, and laboratory guides. This resource center allows free movement...and additional time in class for the instructor to help individual students with problems. Suggestions to individuals and recommendations to students for location of materials take up about 70% of the major amount of class time for the instructor. (The need for detailed planning is obvious.)

Many of the twenty-four professors submitted course outlines or syllabuses with their completed questionnaires. The organization and detail of these materials substantiated the comments of the past two pages. Such materials provide a strong component for assessing teaching competence. One wonders why they are not more used for this purpose.

Requirements for Students

When some of these things have been done by any one of the professors, it is time to discuss requirements for students. Often they are rigorous.

(S) Although he may joke about the course load, he truly expects the student to attain the same level of understanding that has taken (him) years to form. This is at once absurd, yet one is led to believe that any less is mortal sin. In this sense, there are sinners in the class, but they hope and strive for grace, poetic insight.

(S) Expectations are outlined and explained in class, and they are hard enough to make the student think, easy enough not to require you to drop other classes and fair enough so that everyone can do them.

(S) He expects a lot of you; you realize it; and try to live up to his expectations.

(S) (She) openly states what (is wanted) and...tries to show students what to do to receive (these wants).

(P) I sympathize with those who find the course demanding, and with those who, accustomed to precise answers, find the lack of certainty unsettling.

(S) What he expects in quality is never explicitly discussed, but the very intensity of his effort stirred me to react with a deep sense of dedication.

(S) Assignment of continuous work and a rigorous schedule so that the classroom becomes (a real world situation) with production of homework <u>expected</u> if one wishes to pass the course. Attitude that you would not be in the course (upper-division) if you could not do it, i.e., confidence in the student.

How can the apparently rigorous expectations held by many of the professors allow them to make and retain high marks for teaching? The next two sections provide some insight. They discuss the class in operation.

CONDUCTING THE COURSE

<u>By Any Other Name: Lecturing</u>

(P) As a young, modest, and insecure professor...armed with lecture notes and without any philosophy of education and not a very firm one about life except as a part of my cultural inheritance...(I sailed forth). My students received an organized, objective and reasonably good recitation of the parts and interrelationships of ( ). Finally I threw away all lecture notes and in a sense felt liberated. My lectures still centered on ( ) per se but always with philosophical overtones and obviously (were) of greater interest to my students. ( ) took on greater meaning for them as it had for me. ...it was alive and pregnant with meaning and implications.

Most of the two dozen professors lecture quite a bit, by their admission and their students'. Not all but most. There's little attempt to deny that much of the class time is taken up by the professor talking to students, whether the formal lecture is used or whether something called a lecture-discussion is used. With all one has heard about the evils of the lecture, how can a person employ it and still be named an outstanding teacher? The answer lies in definition, preparation and technique--apparently.

(S) He organizes a lecture in which he says more and penetrates deeper than many professors do in a semester.

(P) In order to justify my monopoly of...class time, I try to give an ordered, coherent, and attractive presentation of the material. In the absence of class discussion, which is almost universally accepted by the students in this course, I am open to discussion after class or in my office.

(S) Her lectures are clear, precise and to the point.

(S) There is a rumor that this guy spends 4 or 5 hours preparing for a one-hour class. When you hear that, it makes you listen to that 1 hour because it must be damn good.

(S) Lectures are used extensively - no complaints - because any problems or questions that develop are resolved almost at once before the lecture continues. (The interrupted lecture)

There is vitality involved.

(S) When she lectures, she does not sit behind the desk like a corpse; she is a moving object that holds attention.

(P) I'm especially aware of enunciation as I lecture...and I attempt each time to be more articulate than I was...before.

(P) I <u>do</u> communicate with a fairly wide range of non-verbal signals and gestures.... If I am personally in such a state of mind that I feel my presence and mood would "bring people down," I cancel the class.

(P) When students get restless, I get up and "stalk" the classroom. The latter almost always changes both the tempo and the climate in the room--students pay more attention and I interact in a more direct fashion with them.

(P) No doubt my nervousness is felt by those I face from the desk also, and so it is my first job to reassure us all by a demonstration of confident planning. Because I prefer to stand when I lecture, I leave the desk and move...close to the front row....

(S) Lectures are vivid. ( ) never uses notes, refers often orally to published material giving title, authors, and dates of publication.

(S) Many times she would stop lecturing and ask if there were any questions - which is very important. Too many times I have had teachers who would tell the class to "hold" their questions until the end of the period.

(S) ...body language.... This may not seem like much to you but it keeps my attention up and also signals to me...what to put down in my notes.

(S) ...when lecturing he almost seems to be speaking to us in two different languages, one is spoken and the other involves quite animated use of his hands and arms in conveying an idea...certain gestures for ideas such as conflict, unity....

Lecturing has been damned as the refuge of the ill-prepared and the lazy. But that is not the definition of lecture we are discussing.

(S) He is not pulling out notes from last year.

(P) I believe the reuse of lecture notes would not only make teaching less exciting for me, but would also make the classroom less exciting for the students. There is, I think, an intangible element of fervor in presenting materials just formulated which is absent when a teacher constantly goes back to what he has said before.

(P) In my opinion, no lecture should be written out in its entirety....

The teacher whose lectures are well received apparently knows when to lecture and why. And there are certain courtesies involved.

(P) Lectures and discussions are presented only when the majority of the class seems to be having difficulty.

(S) ...the mix of exciting lectures and discussions in seminars.

(S) The instructor hands out a copy of...lecture notes to each student at the beginning of most lectures. This reduces the writing a student must do and allows him to pay closer attention to what is being said.

(S) ...the presentation of the truly excellent teacher often proves to be so intellectually "loaded" and dramatic, that note-taking is difficult, i.e., my complete concentration effort must be devoted primarily to grasping and digesting the concepts presented. This process should really leave one cognitively exhausted after the lecture.

(P) For example, I have presented the first lecture of the semester again as the final lecture. Students are delighted to see that their understanding has achieved greater depths,

and that they can support what were previously mere assertions. (And what a fine evaluation tool!)

In directing remarks to lectures, students frequently commented on the use of illustrations, descriptions, analogies, etc., employed by the lecturer. Personal references were cited favorably. (S) "These anecdotes are thus very useful to the class as a whole."

When you're good, the response is eager and waiting.

(S) I think this may well be the only course I have taken where I might unequivocally say that I would always prefer ( )'s remarks to student participation.

And the lecture isn't always more hazardous than the seminar.

(P) This past week, for example, I gave a lecture in the large basic course--600+ students--and at several points received scattered applause. Students came up after class and made flattering remarks. The teaching assistants were most complimentary. The next day I "bombed" in an upper-division course. I failed to get the major points stated adequately at the outset. There were too many diversions. I didn't tie up loose ends. In short, instead of providing material which would cause serious thought and reflection, I merely strung a few anecdotes around some unclear analytical points. Not a very comforting experience. (But note the ability to re-examine the hour and determine what went wrong and why.)

Other Than Lecture

Far less attention was paid, by faculty or student, to descriptions of other instructional arrangements--seminars, lab sessions, independent study, conference, and so on. This is not to say such arrangements were uncommon; they involved much of the teaching. But the comments and practices related to such other forms were less directed to the forms themselves than to techniques that characterized them or their employment.

(P) The seminar meetings do not take place at the very beginning of each course, but start after about three weeks, when the students have had time to assimilate the material in the early lectures and the first reports have been prepared. When the group finally coheres, they begin to share their own discoveries, exchange information regarding available...presentations, and supply illustrations for their own work or other people's.

(S) The traditional lecture type presentation has been replaced by...: (1) handouts and excerpts, (2) media presentations followed by discussion, (3) students' reports and research.

(P) Discussion and debate are usually more educationally profitable than lectures.... (Couldn't) I present the basic "facts" in five minutes and leave the rest of the time for discussion, which will probably bring out most of what I would have said anyway, particularly if I bend the discussion a little here and there?

(S) If a student does not like one method of learning, he has several others to use.

(S) ...he doesn't attempt to surround the work but leaves alternative avenues for personal investigation.

The seminar was described clearly by several teachers and students: an organized exchange of ideas or presentations and discussions, with the teacher as a moderator or presenter, and under some controls as to time, participation and content. Often "seminar" is used so generally as to be meaningless. This did not seem to be the case here.

Controls

No matter the form of the class-lecture, seminar, open discussion--there is some control exerted by the teacher. This relates directly to previous comments about clear objectives for the course and an understanding of what is to be included and how it is to be presented or discovered. A class is not just a "happening." (P) "I need (at least) about 15 to 30 minutes... before class to review concepts I would like to cover." There are organization, emphasis and direction to be considered, no matter what the format.

(P) I try to allow student interest, within controlled limits.

(P) I emphasize materials not found in reading assignments.

(S) The material is presented by him and then chopped up, mashed up, and sifted into ideas of meaning to me. By that I mean that a theory is no longer words to me, but ideas supported by some fact and thinking. (This does not describe a "rap" session.)

(S) (She) defines herself...as facilitator rather than as instructor. Promotes my attention and inter-action with other students and the material being covered.

(S) Often she allows students to first present material and will then join the other students in a free discussion. (but when necessary as a guide)

(S) Prof. ( ) runs what would appear to be a very loose class discussion but if an outsider were sitting in (and listening), he would find out that Prof. ( ) is actually in very firm control of the situation.

(S) ...stops approximately every 2 weeks and tells us where we should be in terms of grasping concepts, terms and ideas. He

spells out exactly what he feels we should know and be comfortable with to that point in time.

(S) ...does not waste class time on unnecessary details and spends as little time as possible on administrivia.

(S) She is quite skillful in drawing the student into discussion, and just as skillful in keeping the discussion relevant to the important points.

(P) I see myself as a referee in class discussions.... Thus, I am active in the discussion between students. By active, however, I do not mean in an overbearing manner. I point out when a student is "off the track," illogical, or downright rude; (I) press for more articulation of certain pithy points.

(S) Dr. ( ) acts as the moderator and motivator.

(S) If one word has to describe Professor ( ) I would say "flexibility" for he provides his lecture/discussions with questions and material applicable to those students in attendance and to the time he is teaching.

(S) ...does not impose order to structure, but opens doors, clears cloudy perceptions and <u>reveals</u> order. (Note that what is said is not done is precisely what occurs. The approach and the openness and participation are all-important.

(S) ...class is very stimulating and imaginative while remaining organized.

(S) At the beginning of each lesson he briefly states two or three main points that he would like to stress that day.

(P) Class discussions should be ended consciously by the teacher, not suddenly by the bell.

(P) ...we use student assistants in many of our...laboratories ...our practice (is) to give these...people very specific instructions in preparing for their teaching.

Another form of control is the selection of content and the options for attacking it.

(S) Module type assignments. Handouts and excerpts. Options for student reports and research. Opportunities to challenge the teacher.

As the quotes show, the role of the teacher is an active one. The classroom or laboratory is an active arena, even in the lecture format. The effective teacher seems to have little difficulty in establishing the professor's role definitions and separations.

Just as the objectives for the class are clear and detailed, the expectations and requirements once the class is underway are equally clear.

> (S) ( ) assumed that the student had read and thought about the (assignments), was familiar with the critical works he recommended and had a decent enough vocabulary so that he would not have to (talk down).
>
> (S) I was expected to think - I was not expected to be perfect.
>
> (S) She requires every student to come and see her out of class as a prerequisite for a grade.
>
> (P) I make assignments verbally, but at the same time I distribute a mimeo with the assignment stated on it.

Interestingly, a number of students commented on the desirability of mandatory attendance. Several of the professors noted that they required attendance. No student complained about this requirement (or even mentioned it).

Personal Attention, Encouragement

Continuing attention is paid to the student personally, and to his needs, once the class is underway. And this is appreciated.

> (P) Once my class list is confirmed, I mimeo a list of names, addresses, and phone numbers of each class member, and mine too, and give one to each student. If someone is absent he can call someone else in the class to see what he missed, a student can borrow a book or typewriter easily, can convey a message.
>
> (S) Dr. ( ) was aware of the comfort of the class. For example, the room in which we met was changed to a more comfortable one shortly after the course began. The class was permitted to move around during a lecture, and the students could leave the room freely is they wished.
>
> (S) I think, perhaps, what I find most productive here is the fact that Dr. ( ) considers it "our" course and "our" work.
>
> (S) ...she can identify each student with his name.... Of my six teachers, she is the only one who knows each student by name. It is also very rare to find a teacher who gives much individual assistance to students, especially in ( ) courses that are sometimes extremely crowded.
>
> (S) She also kept us informed of what was going on in the university pertaining to her course as well as to education in general.

(S) He just projects the feeling that his sole mission at that particular point in time is just to help one learn something new and hopefully something that will be of value sometime in the future.

(S) She respects and encourages students' judgement and feedback.

(S) ...many of us felt we had known her for months. She took a great deal of effort to get to know us all personally, something students greatly appreciate on a university campus.

(S) She faces the student and looks at him/her as he asks the question. She seems interested and doesn't break in until the entire question is answered.

(S) Those completing the requirements prior to that time are either excused from class, stay and help slower students in the class as a lab assistant or begin work on the next level.

(P) I consider students coming to my office for help or just to get acquainted a triumph rather than an imposition....

(P) A student who makes sensible and informed contributions to discussions is given whole-hearted encouragement....

(P) I get good results if I allow the paper assignments to be turned in up until 5:00 p.m. on the day that they are due.

(P) If for any reason I dismiss class early, I remain in the classroom rather than leave with the first wave of students. I find that students will often have questions or comments which for some reason they didn't raise in class or wouldn't approach me with in my office.

(S) ...clear in defining new terms and techniques.... Makes learning aids readily available...laboratory is open for us after class hours on weekdays and also on weekends.

Feedback

Feedback, variously defined, was commonly mentioned. The ability of the student as perceived by the instructor, the encouragement of the student who did well, the assistance to those who needed it, the form and tone and consequence of such feedback--these aspects of communication are very important.

(S) ...if we are in good standing she will tell us we are.

(S) She gives advice toward what you need to work on and the points that are the strong points.

(S) ...always has time to discuss progress....

(S) ( ) could always inform students of their progress at any time in the course.

(S) ...tremendous encouragement from his comments on my tests ...he made me feel my answers were worthwhile.

(S) A lot of times the professor leaves the students in the dark about their capabilities and limitations - Mr. ( )'s grade book was always open and so was his manner in dealing with....

(S) ...remarks on this (assigned) written work were always insightful, never lenient, and always helpful....

(S) There is nothing more frustrating than to receive a "B" or "C" grade and no other marking on the paper.

(S) I have never heard him called unfair. If one presents a good viewpoint on a test and backs it up with lecture material and the readings, he is more than satisfied.

(S) Her ability to paraphrase an awkward statement or answer and make it manageable are important....

(P) I work hard to return papers as promptly as possible (in a week or after a weekend).

(P) I treat with respect all ideas brought up by students in discussions, but I don't sacrifice my personal and/or professional integrity. If I just can't buy it, I say so--but I'm careful to say <u>why</u> the idea is unacceptable.

The feedback goes both ways.

(S) She constantly examines her own methods and techniques for purposes of improvement.

(P) ...every new teacher should have the luck of having a blind student in their first course. The presence of such a student stimulated me perhaps more than anything else to clarify the presentation of my subject so as to enable a person to visualize what they had never seen.

<u>Other</u>

There are other things effective teachers do in various class settings. Here are further examples.

(P) I never tell if I can ask. Since I ask, my students very quickly learn they can ask.

(S) ( ) constantly giving demonstrations showing us the material to be learned.

(S) ( ) makes it easy to take notes. (Organized, sequential presentations.)

(S) At the start of a semester when the work load is lighter (in general) he makes you work harder and then when other work loads increase, he lessens his. This, I think, shows a real concern for a student....

Various techniques and options enlarge the scope of the course and increase the student's feeling of gain.

(S) ...students are encouraged to search out, in their daily readings, articles in the (subject) area from daily newspapers, ...periodicals, etc., which are relevant to material previously discussed or to be discussed during the quarter.

(S) In my courses in college, I have learned many answers. The teachers...I thought...good, gave me many answers. Those that I thought were very good took time to explain the relevance of the answer to the question. Dr. ( ) is exceptional. She taught me how to question.

(S) ...he has made me want to think, and through his encouragement he has given me new insight and understanding regarding myself, others, and life in general.

(S) (Because of her openness and support) people in her classes are willing to go out on a limb in voicing opinions.

What does it sum to?

(S) To summarize what I think makes Dr. ( ) an effective teacher, I would say his ability to make the class interesting to the point that you would do additional work to learn more about the subject. His fairness in grading. His openness in manner, which means you would not hesitate to seek him out to answer any question about the subject matter or anything which might be bothering you at the moment. Although I know he is one of the busiest professors I know, he always would make time to speak with students.

(S) ...he is a <u>teacher</u>. Many use the name but few are, most are into a subject or field and use teaching to be self-indulgent. Mr. ( ) clearly wants to <u>teach</u> something to his students - he wants them to walk away with something that is part of him....

In the responses, mention was made by professors and students of the classroom as a stage.

(S) Some teachers are too easygoing in the classroom, tending to make the student do the same. Some teachers depend too much on their ability to perform, to be a character, that they slight the student's ability to perceive the differences between acting and teaching.

(S) ...one never has the sense of a production conceived to generate (only) interest. The animation is rooted in a personal interest, excitement and involvement. There are no gimmicks, but the classroom is never dull.

(P) Applause is nice but the <u>real</u> trick is to have them miss the performance as a role entirely.

Opening night needs all the help possible.

(P) As I enter the classroom I utter the silent prayer, "Lord, let me teach in a manner that is pleasing to you.

GRADING AND EVALUATION

How do outstanding teachers grade students? <u>Openly, systematically and fairly</u>. Students' perceptions and those of the professors were highly congruent.

(S) I have yet to hear any negative comments regarding Dr. ( )'s personality, teaching ability, grading criteria, or any other matter of student concern (a very rare thing indeed considering the popularity of student dissent concerning anything and everything....)

(S) Her tests are not just to determine a grade. She uses them to decide what to teach you.

(S) Students could almost be assured a relatively good grade if they showed they were thinking. There was more emphasis on learning than on exceeding the next person.

(S) He's fair - few professors are - and he will spend enough time to get to know his student personally and grade according to progress made as well as tests....

(P) I learned early in teaching that students with difficulties often did not know they were having trouble, did not know they could get help, or didn't know I, as a teacher, could help them.

<u>Basis for Grading</u>

The basis for grading is explained and is understood. It is extensive enough to allow the student and the professor a fair view of the student's

progress and ability.

(S) ...grades were based on a wide range of activities.

(P) For a semester a student will have at least 15 grades to be averaged.

(S) She bases her evaluation not only on the execution of details, but the comprehension of principles. She also offers a wide variety of material and projects to allow each student an equal opportunity in achievement.

(S) ...(we were) graded according to individual progress and not according to progress measured against others. (the non-competitive approach, frequently mentioned in student responses)

(S) The grade you received in the course was an accumulation of 12 different activities. ( ) evaluated the student for the whole quarter, not just for 2 tests.

(S) The assignment sheet...stated how much each assignment counted toward the final grade.

(S) She evaluates her students on the basis of the improvement they are showing and the work that they can produce.

(S) Criteria for a passing grade are agreed upon by the class ...during the first two sessions.

Grading and Performance Expectations

Expectations and standards are stated and clarified.

(S) It is evident that ( ) expects the majority of her class to pass this course.

(S) Expectations and grading go hand in hand in this course. We were told the first day of class that on every test that would be taken we had to make 90 per cent, or we would have to retake the test.... We knew we could retake the test if there was something we had trouble with, and the retake would involve no repercussions as far as our grade outcome in the course.

(P) Students are evaluated by written measurements and skill performance and must maintain a "C" or better to be satisfactory.

(P) What I look for in student performance is intellectual and human commitment to the material and substantive originality in dealing with it. Most of all, I look for a suggestion of mine taken up, understood, and developed until I comprehend what I had previously only half perceived.

(S) She does not give grades away...can justify any grade made by any student.

(P) I have the reputation of being a hard grader; it is a reputation I do not hope to give up. I read the papers submitted with all the care I can summon, distinguishing the achievement of each student with regard to content, style, and mechanics. I try to indicate how even the best could be better. I am more demanding where I can sense the student has more to give; I try not to be too hard where an indifferent student has passed off another piece of indifferent work.

(S) His grading is not unfair, but it is very strict.

(P) Today you are all "A" grade students; you either maintain that grade, which is my evaluation now, or lose it for a final grade of "B" or "C."

(S) She is a hard marker. Her A's are hard to come by; when you achieve one, she congratulates you! ...because she demands the best, she usually gets the best...her criticisms are always helpful, and her praises are heady stuff!

(S) He has encouraged each of us by informing us that we would be working on a mastery system rather than a failure system.

(S) I feel slightly traitorous in calling him an intellectual bully, but he does impress one with the feeling of being nearly duped if you are not candid and as sharp as possible.

The responsibility is the professor's. The professor is not apt to delegate it to someone else.

(S) The students know the instructor grades all his own papers....

In one form or another this comment occurred frequently.

Personal Attention

Personal attention extends to testing, evaluation and grading.

(S) A student could always go to ( ) to ask about...progress. He would tell you in direct terms and he never played mind games the way a lot of teachers do in the sense that they will tell you you're doing well until you get a D or F at the end of the course.

(S) There are never condemnations but very specific constructive criticisms to aid the student. Any specific problems may be discussed with the teacher; one need not merely rely on the written word on a returned paper for help.

(S) ...makes sure you understand the questions before you leave her office.

(S) The student also feels more a part of the course since it is known that the final grade will not be arbitrary, but instead based on the agreement reached with ( ).

(P) I am understanding about certain things that might occur; e.g., late papers, class absences. I am definitely not a "soft touch," but I am flexible as well as firm in my demands.

(S) He did an excellent job on his final. He scheduled it in an area where there was...quiet. It was the best planning in any school or at any time, I've ever seen. (So little goes so far.)

(S) She takes into consideration, however, that everyone has "one of those days."

(P) I alw s provide a distribution of the numerical grades from an examination so that students can see how they are performing relative to their fellow students.

Then there is promptness. The early verdict is appreciated.

(S) Papers were thoroughly, promptly graded.

(S) I get my test answers immediately after the test....

(S) Each exam was graded and given back to us at the next class session.

Particular Techniques or Accommodations

There are many of these that were well received.

(S) ...no make up test system...(but) a best of three of four tests.

(S) She throws out one or two of your worst grades when grades are due.

(S) The really fantastic part about her grading system was this; everyone had the chance to revise (as many times as they wanted) their papers. She graded every one of them and each contained those little notes! The grade on our last revision paper was the grade she recorded. Now that is a fair system!

(S) Exams may be taken either orally or in writing. (according to the student's perceptions of his best showing)

(S) He even dropped our lowest grade.

(S) ...he gives out study guide questions from which the actual questions in the test are taken...(and) allows you to get together with other students to ready for an exam, and he wants us to do this. There is no competition between student; just between our thoughts.

(S) He encourages us to share notes, books, to study together, etc. There is no pressure of failing and you can relax and learn.

(S) If the paper receives "C" or below, it is advisable to revise the paper, or if the student feels that the paper can be improved in any way, he or she has that privilege.

(S) ( ) hands out a study guide with all the questions we are to be tested on. We prepare for all 6 to 8 of them and then go in and write on 2 of them at our speed and time. This method has eliminated the crazy test fear. We all don't function as well under stress. I can't understand why more teachers don't use this method. The emphasis is on getting and understanding the information - learning rather than testing to see how much work you have or have not done.

And the listing goes on, for students responded heartily to the question about grading, testing and evaluation.

(S) ...offers all the students in his class two choices as to how...to receive his grade in the course. The first one involves two semester tests (30% each) and a final (40%). The other choice involves the addition of an extra credit paper on a topic of the student's choice for 15%, the two semester tests (25% each) and the final (35%). The tests are neither extremely easy nor extremely difficult. They are what I would consider as necessary to give an indication to both the student and the professor the extent of the student's grasp of the subject matter.

(S) There were weekly quizzes only the best of five of which counted....

(P) All exams are take-home, to avoid time limits. Any student who completed the required problems (a rather demanding amount)...need not worry about not passing or receiving a poor grade.

(S) The student puts his or her name on the back of the exam so that the instructor will not know whose test he has graded until all the tests and grades are completed.

(P) I have an agreement with my classes that if I cannot hand back the first quiz to each of the individual members of the class by name, they can put their own grade on the quiz.

(P) I require students to keep a complete file of all note cards, rough drafts, etc., for all papers written for the course.... If a student isn't doing well in the course and isn't making any significant improvement, I ask him in for a conference and tell him to bring his files with him. I can study this file and can often tell where he might be falling short in his pre-writing efforts, make suggestions for improvement, and watch for signs of it...thereafter.

(P) ...usually I give out a list of possible questions well in advance of the final...and promise to include some of them. There will also be one or two questions not distributed in advance. I have sometimes invited the class to submit questions of their own, which I will consider using.

But sometimes practices are abandoned, after reflection:

(P) For a few years, I allowed an unlimited number of revisions on an unlimited number of papers. I abandoned this... because what would happen was: after the first revision or two on a paper the major errors were ironed out about as well as was possible (by the student), and any subsequent revisions just meant the student was incorporating my marginal comments. Thus, the paper began to reflect my writing more than the student's... I've also stopped letting students write an evaluation of each other's argumentative paper term project. While peer evaluation sounds good in theory, after questioning students each semester about the value of such an activity, I've determined it is for the most part meaningless for them. Students don't fully trust their peers' critical evaluation..., and would rather revise their papers on the basis of what I, as the teacher, suggest to them.

Consequences

The results of such practices and attitudes can be rewarding.

(S) I learned to study to learn instead of just for a grade.

(S) ...one never thinks of grades in ( )'s class; one only reads (his) very penetrating comments of one's work.

(S) Exams that educate (new material).

(S) The grading system allowed for personal variation in talents. Students who took exams well were not at an advantage over those that wrote well, or those that best expressed

ideas through speaking. All of these were counted equally, and the grade in the best effort was doubled. This grading benefitted my progress by enabling me to try several ways of expression and of demonstrating my grasp of the material while giving me incentive to do well by doubling the grade I received in my best work. ( ) is a difficult grader, and she is critical of poor work.

(S) ...his style of grading is like being paid a salary for a job; the top achievers get the top pay and the normal workers get a base pay not much lower than the top pay. I find it an incentive to try harder with this type of plan.

Evaluation

A question about evaluation of the class and of the professor produced these comments.

(P) Students naturally evaluate you all the time. They have come to your course with a certain knowledge of your ways, your personality, your methods, your toughness, your attitude toward students.

(P) My measure of success is the degree to which the course has an affirmative impact on a student's analytical writing.

(P) ...if I compared the course I teach today to the course I taught three years ago it would be difficult to recognize it as the same course.

(P) I do receive many letters from my past students telling me things they do and recalling incidents from the class that have made an impact upon their teaching. It is this knowledge of these brief incidents that constantly keeps me alert to what I am attempting to do.

(P) Occasionally on the next to the last day of a course I pass out blank pieces of paper and invite my students to write down the strengths and weaknesses of the course as they see it, no holds barred....

(P) Even the most inexperienced teacher senses the class reaction every day, and this is the most accurate barometer ever devised. It is chastening to observe how often one has been simultaneously successful and unsuccessful - a sign of the crucial importance of the state of mind of the particular student on a particular day.

(P) Most often I am dissatisfied with my class performance despite my optimism in entering the classroom.

(P) The success of my teaching is measured by developing students that are smarter than I am and know more about certain phases of the subject than I do.

Evaluation is sometimes very apparent, by counting heads.

> (S) ...which makes his class the only class I've yet to cut with only 2 or 3 weeks left in the semester.

These past few pages have described hard work. Much of what has been said is quantitative and could be done by most teachers--the re-reading of papers and tests, the long preparation, the assembling of many evidences of performance, not just a mid-term and/or a final exam. Much of it is sweat, not art; that and openness and objectivity in testing and grading.

Many of the techniques and reinforcements just described would be as applauded by an educational psychologist as they are by students. The standards described are not minimal, the expectations are not low. The professor's job includes the responsibility to evaluate, to make judgements. The student pays money for this. But what a difference a difference makes, as seen by student responses to fairness and to imaginative, productive grading-evaluation procedures that emphasize and support course goals and contents.

SUMMARY/COMMENT

> (S) I wish that all of the professors and doctors would sit in one of this instructor's classes and observe her techniques...in going about teaching.... The things she does and the way she does these can be (done) and... accepted by anyone.

Probably not by everyone and in the same manner or with the same effect, but the student makes the point well. Much of what outstanding teachers do can be imitated. Much of what they seem to be, as projected to the students, can be emulated.

> (S) The main characteristic is that which is hardest to place, her ability to retain the respect due to one in her position without jeopardizing the openness needed to create an atmosphere of learning.

> (S) Let me reiterate the four main points which make ( ), in my opinion, an outstanding professional.... They are 1) his flexibility in the presentation of subject matter; 2) the alternative means he provides to learning, and how a grade is reached; 3) his encouragement of experimentation and creativity; 4) the respect and concern for all his students, and the enthusiasm he himself generates inside and outside the classroom.

> (P) The expectations of students today include so much more opportunity to express their own views that it is futile to reject their demands, even though one is aware of the sacrifices being made to accommodate them. It takes a great deal

> of expert juggling to secure as many of the values one seeks as can be retained under current circumstances. But thus it was always.

Anyone can learn what is available by way of information about students. The records, class lists, interview possibilities--these and other things noted in the previous sections are not difficult to arrange. But apparently few teachers take advantage of this information and of opportunities for receiving from students additional information about them and their expectations. Still fewer apparently take such information into account in planning and revising their course work and their presentations.

The arrangement of content, of classroom setting, and of options is open to any teacher. Some take advantage of this opportunity to the satisfaction and praise of their students; others don't. Previous sections provide examples of how outstanding teachers react to the opportunity. Students provide examples of the results.

The lecture has been and remains a common, perhaps prevalent, mode of instruction. There are techniques that make the lecture acceptable, even applauded. Some of these techniques have been described. Similarly, seminars, laboratory courses and other content-instructional-learning formats are improved by many of the techniques described. Concern for the student and the close personal attention so lauded are applicable to any setting and technique.

Grading is forever with us. The outstanding teacher receives credit for this, not criticism. In all the responses, no mention was made of non-grading, of pass-fail, of broad rather than discriminating evaluation. The October 15, 1973, issue of the Chronicle of Higher Education reports that, totally, 97 per cent of our colleges (all types and levels) use letter grades in at least some of the curriculum. (Pass-fail also is used in about 55 per cent of the institutions.) Grading is not objected to by students, if grading is used to the student's benefit, as perceived by the student.

The effects on the student of an outstanding teacher are hard to overestimate.

> (S) By looking at my instructor I have become stronger in my belief that a person can achieve anything he wants if he is willing to work at it.
>
> (S) By knowing (italics added) ( ), I have come to realize how important the role of a teacher is--how much he can influence a student's life.
>
> (S) This teacher has had more impact on my life than any teacher I've ever known before. I feel that it is his dedication and love of what he is doing...he cares, and becomes involved.

No teacher incorporates all the attitudes, characteristics and techniques mentioned in this report. The reader can examine himself (or read his ratings) and decide what he might add from the information presented here. This writer believes that the typical student rating form (rating of the professor) can supply enough information for the teacher to identify the categories of his strengths and weaknesses. References to some of the techniques described in this paper well might improve the ratings in one or another category. The writer has examined a number of common evaluation forms. Typically they rank professors comparatively, in deciles or quartiles--e.g., 90th percentile or lowest 25 per cent. Given the weighting systems used in most such forms, improvement in a single area, for example testing and grading, can improve one's relative position considerably. Such a simple act as publishing and distributing a statement of objectives and an explanation of grading practices could move a teacher up a given scale.

In most colleges and universities there is some agency or department charged with the improvement of teaching. This may be a formal Center for the Improvement of Instruction, with a staff and the responsibility for course evaluation, the collection of material on effective teaching, the filming or taping of actual teaching (for examination and discussion), the development of rating forms, the analysis of tests and testing procedures, etc. There may be a standing committee that hopes to get around to the improvement of teaching. There may be occasional departmental discussions aimed at improving teaching. Too often central administration does not guide this effort, and results are intermittent or irresolute.

But no matter what the agency or the good intentions of the particular institution, the teacher, the individual, is the agent of change, and this is one person. As valuable as the seminars on research in teaching may be, as instructive as the observations of one's own teaching (on film) or another's may be, as necessary as a corpus of materials on effective teaching may be--the practitioner needs specified information on the act of teaching, on its personal and operational elements. This paper provides some illustrations. No prescriptions are here, but one can take this information home and identify certain things that look promising, that seem worth attempting. The quotes from students argue strongly for the effectiveness of such attempts.

Unfortunately, few teachers, even outstanding ones, address the subject of effective teaching in a way that shares their insights and experiences with others.

> (P) I found it quite a challenging experience to have to sit down for the first time in a long career and actually try to write about my philosophy and methods of teaching.
>
> (P) Since this is the single instance in my...professional life that I have not been early with something, I...wonder why. I'll therefore begin (the questionnaire in this instance)

> by saying that although I help others scrutinize their teaching, I find it hard to do so myself.

Hard, indeed, but much needed. Information about successful practices provides a basis for more systematic investigation and description.